

HB 2096 -- HEALTH INSURANCE FOR COLLEGE STUDENT

SPONSOR: Chipman

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs by a vote of 8 to 2.

This bill specifies that any student who shows proof of existing health insurance coverage to a public college or university at any time during the student's enrollment is excused from the payment of any fees, costs, or related expenses imposed for the provision of health care or health insurance.

These provisions do not preclude public colleges and universities from offering health insurance coverage to students who do not have coverage and charging fees for such coverage or from providing student health services and charging fees for those services to undergraduate students who do not have health insurance coverage.

This bill is similar to HB 1331 (2015).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that under the Affordable Care Act, individuals are already required to have health insurance, thus it doesn't make sense why students must pay the student health fee if they already have access to health insurance. The University of Missouri currently charges around \$100 per student per semester; Missouri State charges \$58 per student per semester; UMKC, \$4.50 per student per credit hour; Truman State, \$27 per student per semester. A student should not be required to pay for services they are not accessing

Testifying for the bill was Representative Chipman.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the fees being charged cover free basic office visits throughout the semester. The vast amount of services being offered and accessed by students are services that are not covered under typical health insurance plans. They do a lot of wellness education and first response work for suicidal individuals, sexual assault victims, and victims of crimes. They also provide substance abuse assistance to the students. The fees support the general health and well being of the students.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri State University, and Paul Wagner, Council On Public Higher Education.